denver apple pi Seed

VOLUME 6 NUMBER 1

JANUARY 1984

NEWSLETTER OF THE DENVER APPLE PI COMPUTER USERS' CLUB

APPLES AND WARGAMES

BY STEVEN MARTIN

I have been playing wargames for about 7 years and have had an Apple II+ computer for nearly 3 years, and it has been a great discovery to find that the two hobbies are being combined. There are currently two companies who are developing historical wargames for the Apple computer.

Wait a minute, perhaps I am getting ahead of myself. Some of you are, undoubtedly wondering what I am talking about when I say Wargames. Pictures of Army and Marine troops marching up and down the countryside fighting mach battles, or a young kid playing 'Thermo Nuclear War' against the NORAD computer system are probably going through your head. Modern day commercial wargames are a bit more abstract than those 'Wargames', and are decendants of the games the military has used for over a century to examine strategies and tactics the actual combat troops would use. Typical wargames are played on a board that has a map of a battle field and the fighting units are small cardboard chips with markings that tell the players what kind combat strength and mobility a unit has. Games range from simulations of the epic battles of ancient Greece to speculative battles of the future. Size ranges from maps that are no more than a few inches across covering a small village fight, to maps which are several feet across covering the entire world.

The original game company to produce a wargame for general publication was Avalon Hill of Baltimore Maryland. That first historical simulation was a recreation of the battle of Gettysburg. It was published over twenty years ago. Today Avalon Hill publishes dozens of games with titles such as Third Reich, Midway, Squad Leader, The Russian Campaign, Caesar at Alesia and King Maker. Besides this we now have literally dozens of companies making wargames with hundreds of different battles being recreated. Yet it comes as no surprise that Avalon Hill was the first company to publish wargames for the home computer. Their original effort in this area was 'Midway Campaign' which recreates the famous World War II carrier battle. Note that while Avalon Hill has also produced adventure and arcade games I am concerning myself, here, with historical simulations only.

Shortly after that another company, Strategic Simulations Incorporated (SSI), began to produce wargames for the Apple. SSI, however, was strictly a software company and had not produced wargames prior to their computer simulations. Nonetheless, while Avalon Hill's first computer wargames were simple games for one player that took less than a half hour to play the SSI games could be played against either the computer or another player and games might last up to 3 hours. Today SSI's 'Guadalcanal Campaign' will take over 24 hours to play and maintains a high degree of complexity while being quite easy to play. The

GOTO 8

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APPLE PI
P.O. BOX 17467
DENVER, COLORADO 80217

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GENERAL MEETING · · · **Jan. 5**

SWAP MEET · · · **Jan. 8**

BOARD MEETING · · · **Jan. 11**

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION
$10 APPLICATION FEE AND $18 PER YEAR DUES

APPLE PI is an Apple Computer Users Group - not affiliated with Apple Computer, Inc. - that provides many member benefits, some of which are:

MONTHLY MEETINGS-

On the first Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. APPLE PI holds its general meeting at the Greene Center, Colorado School of Mines Campus, Golden, Colorado. This meeting is a combination of an informational meeting, new product announcements, and a short business meeting. The members are given an opportunity to buy computer supplies a little above cost. Software products are given away as door prizes.

On the Sunday following the general meeting there is an informal meet which is usually held at the home of a member, the location of which is announced in the newsletter and at the general meeting. This meeting is from 10:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. and provides a more informal environment to seek or give advice to fellow members and get copies of programs from the APPLE PI Library. Both of these meetings are open to the general public but only members have access to products that are sold.

PROGRAM LIBRARY-

APPLE PI currently has a library of 8,000 programs. All current disks are in 16 sector (3.3, Pascal, CP/M) format and are available to any member. APPLE PI Members can obtain copies from the library:

1) By coming to the monthly informal meeting (swap meet);
2) By written request to the club librarian (at any meeting or by mail);
3) By electronic mail on APPLE PI's bulletin board system:

When requesting copies, please include the following information:

a) Your Name, Address, and Phone number;
b) Disk Category and Volume Number;
c) Blank Diskette(s) or request to utilize a new disk (member will be charged $2.50 for the new disk);
d) Copy fee ($1.00 per diskette side unless you donate a program you have written at the same time and fill out a Progam Submission Form). Only complete sides of disks will be copied.
e) Instructions on how the disks are to be returned, i.e., at the next meeting, by mail, etc. (IF RETURN IS TO BE BY MAIL PLEASE BE SURE TO INCLUDE A STAMPED, SELF-ADDRESSED FLOPPY DISK MAILER, AND $2.50 TO COVER SHIPPING COSTS).

DISK OF THE MONTH-

Each month a collection of some of the best programs donated to APPLE PI during the preceding month are made available. The DOM can be purchased at any group meeting or by mail.

DUES-

Current membership dues are $18.00 per year, with a one-time application fee of $10.00. Checks should be made payable to APPLE PI.

Dear Johnny AppleSeed ?

Dear John:

I have an Apple /// monitor that I am pleased with. However, sometimes I would like to see a color display of programs like arcade games. I have a color TV, but I don't know if it will work with my computer.

Tired of B & W

Dear Tired of B & W:

Yes, you can use your color TV with your Apple. First, you must have a device called an RF Modulator. It converts signals from your Apple into TV signals. RF Modulators are available at most computer stores, and are fairly inexpensive (less than $30). Most likely your RF modulator won't come with cables to connect it to your TV. You will have to get these cables at an electronics store (like Radio Shack). Be sure to take your RF Modulator with you so you can get the proper cable.

Once you have everything connected properly, chances are that you will find the display on your color TV to be slightly fuzzy. This is because you color TV was never designed to be a color monitor. You can adjust the set so that it is acceptable. Turn the BRIGHTNESS down (usually counter-clockwise) and the CONTRAST up (usually clockwise). This will clarify the picture a bit.

John

Dear John:

I am a teacher at a junior high school, and I purchased my Apple //e about three months ago. I have a lot of friends who have Apples, and they have never purchased any software -- they have copies of everything they want. My friends tell me it is OK to copy software because the authors make millions of dollars anyway. I don't think it's right. What do you think?

Clean and Honest

Dear Clean and Honest:

As a software author myself, I am have very strong feelings on the issue of 'piracy', or the illegal copying of software. Your friends are wrong. Most software authors barely make enough money to pay the rent every month. They are struggling for every dollar they make. It takes a lot of money and time to produce software, and most popular software authors do their job full-time.

Besides the fact that piracy deprives the authors of their well-deserved revenue, it IS ILLEGAL (under federal law) to copy copyrighted software. Title 17, U.S.-Code, section 506 states that the copying of copyrighted software "may carry a fine up to $50,000, or imprisonment, or both." Many times 'pirates' have been taken to court for this offense and have been severly punished.

There is nothing you can do about people you know who are pirates. We all know who they are, and if they want to stoop down low enough to take on the title of a pirate, they are more than welcome to do so. Apple Pi/Denver discourages piracy, it is not a pirates club, and pirates are NOT welcome in Apple Pi/Denver.

All in all, you must keep your dignity and not copy software. In the end, you'll be better off. If there are times when you can't afford the software you have to have, get a copy of it from a friend, but promise yourself that when you have the money you'll buy an honest copy of the software.

John

Dear John:

My computer is a year old now, and everybody tells me to clean my disk drives. I don't know why they have to be cleaned, and how often it must be done. Can you give me some advice?

Dirty Drives

Dear Dirty Drives:

The people telling you to clean your drives are correct. In fact, you should have cleaned your drives a long time ago.

Tiny particles collect on the Read/Write head of your disk drive. If they are allowed to build-up, they will hamper the performance of your drives. Worse yet, if you allow the particles to build-up to severe levels, the particles can scratch your Read/Write head and cause some very expensive damage.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

(December Meeting)

The Meeting was called to order by Dave Nelson at 7:00pm, Dec. 1, 1983, at the Greene Center (Colorado School of Mines). He announced that this month's SWAP Meet was to be combined with the General Meeting, and that the copy fee was reduced from $1.00 to $.50 per side as a Christmas present from the Club.

The program was presented by P.J. Raval, an Account Executive with E.F. Hutton, who spoke on using the computer as an aid to tax and retirement planning. He demonstrated Aardvark Software's "Individual Tax Planning" program, and E.F. Hutton's own program, "Tax Free Retirement Income Planning".

In the spirit of the season, a very special Christmas tree was provided by the Vitrys (it was covered with Apples) and some of our members and store sponsors were especially generous with door prizes (33 in all). This month, in order to expedite the process, we went back to the old system of drawing names from a box. And, while Santa, himself, was too busy to be present, several of his "elves" were discovered in the audience and they were persuaded to come up and assist by matching up the names and the packages under the tree. Door prizes, their contributers and winners were:

Two Astro-Scope starchart Gift Certificates (as advertised in the Dec. SEED), donated by Marion Stortz, were won by Dave Greeley and Gregg Peterson.

Datafax program, contributed by COMPUTER CONNECTION OF BOULDER, was won by Lemm Allen.

Two copies of Dow Jones Analyzer, contributed by COMPUTER CONNECTION OF BOULDER, were won by Paul Searly and Bob Lohmar.

Front Line Game, also from COMPUTER CONNECTION OF BOULDER, won by Darll Johnson.

Two copies of the game, Predator, also donated by COMPUTER CONNECTION OF BOULDER, were won by Kathleen Hastings and Kevin Hunter.

Two copies of Calcstar, from COMPUTER CONNECTION OF BOULDER, were won by Gary Hoffmann and Fred Yates.

Two copies of Stock Options Analysis, also contributed by COMPUTER CONNECTION OF BOULDER, were won by Dick Justice and Preston Driggers.

Five copies of the game, Photar, donated by COMPUTERLAND OF DENVER, were won by Al Tara, Ron Heath, Terry Street, Mabel Duran and Tom Decker.

A free class from NEIGHBORHOOD COMPUTER was won by Michael McMillan.

Screenwriter II, word processing program, contributed by COMPUTER LINE was won by Marion Stortz.

The game, Conglomerates Collide, donated by COMPUTERLAND OF NORTH DENVER, was won by Dan Bentz.

Stickybear ABC, also contributed by COMPUTERLAND OF NORTH DENVER, was won by Jon Laws.

Stickybear Numbers, also from COMPUTERLAND OF NORTH DENVER, was won by Ron Shoemaker.

Five free classes (of winner's choice), contributed by MICROCOMPUTER ACADEMY, were won by Gregg Scott, Glenn M. Snyder, Ed Hoing, Bob Vitry and Bernice Hein.

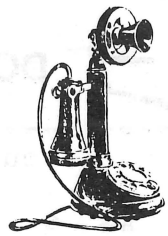
Five packages containing a hard disk case containing two DOMs were contributed by Apple Pi. Bill Krieg, Erica Winkelhake, Wayne Corrigan, Steve Brumley and Trudi Nelson were the winners.

A copy of PFS (Personal Filing System) was contributed by COLORADO COMPUTER SYSTEMS and won by Dennis Hurianek.

There were no losers because after all the door prizes were awarded, Marsha Camblin of MICROCOMPUTER ACADEMY offered $50.00 gift certificates to everyone present. (These may be applied towards tuition on any of their classes)

The rest of the evening was left open for a SWAP Meet and Christmas party. Refreshments were arranged by Bob and Mary Ann Vitry.

Rich Waite, the Treasurer's able assistant who manages product sales, described some of the items on sale this month. Dave Nelson described some special gift items for sale by Randy Ansley (his famous computer "Bug Trap" which sells for $5.00 and would adapt nicely to a key chain, and his latest undertaking, an attractive stained glass "apple", suitable for a tree ornament, for $10.00. Warren Magdanz, of COLORADO COMPUTER SYSTEMS, represented his store with a sales table, which featured a number of very attractive "big league" items (such as printers and disk drives) at equally attractive prices.



TELECOMMUNICATIONS
DENVER BBS NUMBERS

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Apple Pi	469-7541
Aurora-Net	343-84Ø1
Biz-Net	798-8176
Cheyenne Mountain	753-1554
Computer-Line	758-3441
The Controller Board	69Ø-9423
GBBS II	693-1Ø64
Lakewood RCPM/RBBS	985-11Ø8
The Neutral zone	985-9184
Off the wall	443-3367
PETULA	232-85Ø9
RB Robot/IBMPC	279-5657
RCPM/RBBS	499-9169
Remote North Star	444-7231
TBBS#1 (Apparat)	741-4Ø71
TBBS#2 (UFONET)	278-4244
TBBS-Software Review	695-4518
The Testing Zone	427-7114
THE CHESS BOARD	(3Ø3)-798-7620

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For corrections, contact T.R. Hein
at (3Ø3) 424-8357

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APPLE II+ FOR SALE. Best Offer.
Also have 8Ø COLUMN CARD.
Call 832-6417 and leave a message.

****

I AM LOOKING FOR SOMEONE WHO HAS EXPERIENCE USING THE APPLE-CAT WITH THE FIRMWARE OPTION AT 1200 BAUD FROM A BASIC OR PASCAL PROGRAM. I HAVE AN APPLICATION RUNNING FROM A BASIC PROGRAM AT 300 BAUD, BUT AT 1200 BASIC IS TOO SLOW, AND MISSES CHARACTERS. IF YOU HAVE ANY IDEAS PLEASE CALL JIM WHITE AT 979-3605 EVES OR 793-7917 DAYS.

THANKS,
JIM WHITE

JOHNNY APPLESEED

Therefore, it is an absolute must that you clean your disk drives.

Commercial cleaning kits are readily available. It is suggested that you purchase one of these inexpensive kits instead of using a 'home-brew' cleaning kit. Most of the cleaning kits on the market today suggest you clean your disk drives every day. That is not only ridiculous, but excessive cleaning can damage your drives. How often you clean your drives should depend on how often you use them. If you use them every day of the year, you might want to clean them every two weeks. How ever much you use your drives, they should be cleaned AT LEAST every two months. Mark the date on your calendar, it is an important one.

John

Questions should be sent to:

Johnny Appleseed
% Apple Pi/Denver
P.O. Box 17467
Denver, Colorado 80217

All letters will be answered.

"SWAP" Meet

The January SWAP Meet will be held on Sunday, January 8th, from 1Ø:ØØam to 3:ØØpm, at "The Pond" Clubhouse, hosted by Mr. & Mrs. Gayle McClish.

DIRECTIONS: North on Wadsworth to 88th. Turn left on 88th to Garrison St. Turn left on Garrison and go to the first right. Follow that street to the "The Pond" Clubhouse. For further information, call Gayle McClish 457-5258 (home) or 423-2Ø14 (Clubhouse).

SOME BYTES FROM DAVE E.

FIVE GOALS FOR THE NEW YEAR

What do we need to be a really great club? A club that people find deeply rewarding and worthwhile? A club that excites & involves people? Is it possible for Apple Pi to be a really great club?

I think so.

Clubs are made of people, and we have many of the finest people of Denver in our membership. Face it, we all respect those people, like us, who have laid down two grand for an Apple computer. When we talk about our membership, we are talking about an impressive group of people who are very interested in technology, innovation, and education.

So where do we go from here?

There are some define things that need doing. I believe the following five are the most urgent, and I am going to call them our five goals. Let's work together and make them happen!

- FIVE GOALS: -

1) CLUB DIRECTORY

2) UPDATE BYLAWS

3) CLASSES - start a listing in the Seed

4) TAXES - establish state & fed status

5) BUDGET - overall budget for '84

Remember, board meetings will be on Tuesdays (not Wednesdays) starting in Jan! Everyone is welcome. Come and contribute your thoughts!

Thanks! - D. Eisler

DON'T MISS THIS !!

cut along dotted line

As a New Year's special we are offering $25 off the OVERVIEW OF MICROCOMPUTERS class at Microcomputer Academy.

Simply present this coupon when enrolling and your class fee will be $25 less!

offer expires January 31, 1984

The OVERVIEW OF MICROCOMPUTERS class is a class designed to show a computer novice the wonders and powers of a microcomputer.

The class is taught with a combination of lecture, demonstration and 'hands-on' usage.

MICROCOMPUTER ACADEMY, INC. **759-2122**

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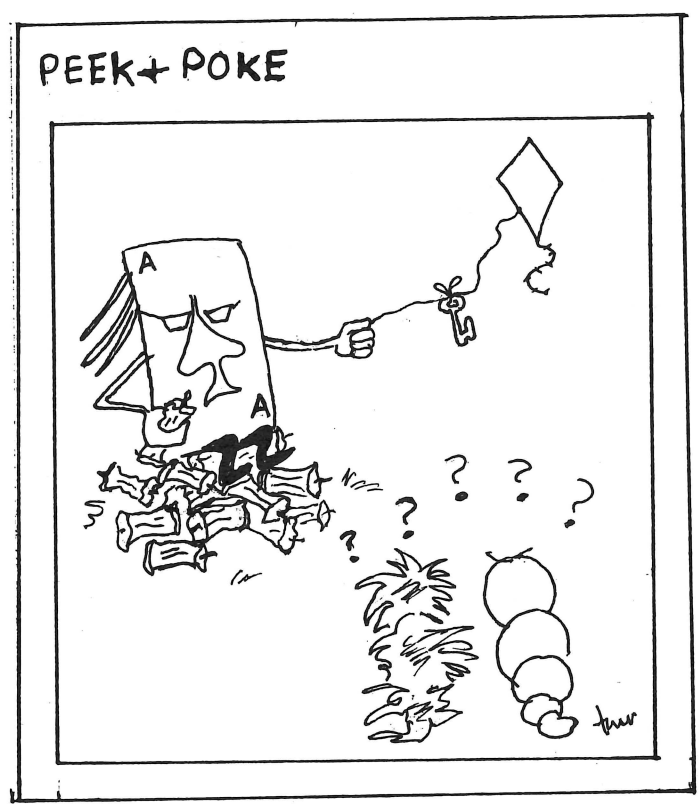

Thank you!

Special thanks are due this month to those stores and businesses that contributed door prizes for our December Meeting and helped to make our Christmas Party such a success.

COLORADO COMPUTER SYSTEMS
3005 W. 74th Ave.
Westminster, CO 80030
(303) 426-5880

COMPUTER CONNECTION OF BOULDER
1600 38th St.
Boulder, CO 80303
(303) 449-8282

THE COMPUTER LINE
1136 S. Colorado Blvd.
Denver, CO 80222
(303) 758-3261

COMPUTERLAND OF DENVER
2411 S. Colorado Blvd.
Denver, CO 80222
(303) 759-4685

COMPUTERLAND OF NORTH DENVER
8749 Wadsworth Blvd.
Arvada, CO 80003
(303) 420-1877

MICROCOMPUTER ACADEMY
2149 S. Clermont
Denver, CO 80222
(303) 759-2122

NEIGHBORHOOD COMPUTERS
13045 W. Alameda Parkway
Lakewood, CO 80228
(303) 988-9140

STORTZ STARCHART SERVICE
2834 E. 5th Ave.
Denver, CO 80206
(303) 377-5587

STOP IN AND SAY:

"HI... I'M WITH APPLE PI"

LIBRARIAN'S REPORT

With this SEED, we start a new year. I would like to see 1984 be a year for contributing to Apple Pi's diskette library. Currently, we have DOS 3.3, Pascal, and CP/M sections of the library. Therefore, your contributions can be in almost any format. Almost all of the public domain contributions we receive are placed on the DOMs.

For the January DOM, we have the following:

Denver's Apple Pi Disk of the Month

JANUARY '84 DOM

AMPERSAND CATALOG	DOS ERROR CUSTOMIZER	DOS TUTORIAL
EPSON MX-80 LABEL MAK	IDEAL BODY WEIGHT	INCOME TAX HELPER
INTERGER LIST STOPPER	NEC CUSTOM LABEL MAKE	NEC PRINTER INSTRUCTI
NEC PRINTER SETUP	NEC PRINTER SETUP 2.0	PING PONG OR HANDBALL
SECTOR LIST	SLIDE THE LETTERS	TICKER TAPE
WORLD WAR III	WORLD WAR III INSTRUC	YAHTZEE

Also, I am told (I have NO confirmation) that the disks that were ordered some time ago from A.P.P.L.E. are in Denver now. I hope to have more information on them by the General Meeting.

Once again, let me stress how important it is for members to have their catalog disks updated monthly. The update is free of charge, and all you have to do is bring in your catalog disk (or any other disk). Disks numbers from the original (MAY 1983) catalog disks are incorrect and CANNOT be cross-referenced. Therefore, if you plan on getting copies from the library, make sure you use a current copy of the catalog disk to select from.

And finally, the new version (4-C) of Diversa-DOS has arrived from DSR, Inc. It promises to be the most useful version of Diversa-DOS, including such features as TLIST.

----> Bob Hein, Librarian <----

WAR GAMES [FROM 1]

reason for the ease of play in computer wargames is that the computer takes care of the nuts and bolts technicalities of the game while the player can concentrate on strategy and tactics. Unfortunately play is simplified by taking away some of the players control over his units. An example of this is in the SSI 'Guadalcanal Campaign'. The player can put ships together to form Task forces which maneuver to find the enemy ships, but once an engagment occurs the computer decides which ships attack which enemy ships. This is often less than satisfactory for the player and gets to be a bit irritating.

The problem is the limitations of home computers. With limited memory the games must keep things simple in order for the computer to be able to handle everything. This problem is heightened when graphics are used to show unit positions on a map. Avalon Hill has tried to remedy this problem by providing a seperate map board and unit counters, similar to the original board games, thus freeing the computer from those details. This seems to be logical since the graphics are useful only to the human player and serve no funcion for the computer. The efforts in this direction are just getting started and we will have to see if the idea works. An obvious extension to this design would be to develope computer games that use already existant board games where the computer merely acts as an opponent or as a referee for two human players. One of the biggest problems with classical wargames has been the inability to recreate the 'Fog of War' wherein the opponents are limited in what they can know about their enemies strengths and weaknesses. This is where computers can be helpful, by acting as referee only that information that a player should be aware of will be disclosed by the computer.

Another interesting field which may be linked to wargames is telecommunications. Here games can be played by two different players at seperate locations utilizing phone lines and computers with modems. One game that has been designed for this kind of play is COMMBAT. Unfortunately I have not yet seen the Apple version of the game. The added benefit of this system is that the two players do not need to own similar computers, but graphics are not used for play. Keep an eye out for more of this type of thing as more and more computer owners invest in modems.

Enough for introductions. What follows is a partial list of wargames that are available for the Apple. I have listed most of the important information about each and have given a brief description of the games. These are games that I am familiar with and do not reflect all of the games that are available. The descriptions are as follows:

Publisher: Oh yea! There are others besides Avalon Hill and SSI.

Price: Manufacturer's suggested retail price.

Playing time: This is an average for the particular game. This will vary depending on whether you are playing against the computer or another human.

Graphics: Three types of graphics are listed. Hires, Lores and Text. Text means that standard ASCII characters are used to display a mapboard much like a tic-tac-toe game. This sometimes works out well, especialy in Naval simulations where one wave looks pretty much like the next. N/A means the game does not use computer graphics.

Complexity: This is an arbitrary rating that represents the relative ease of learning and playing a game. 1=Easiest 5=Hardest. For instance Monopoly might be a 2. Remember, learning and mastering are two different things!

Overall Rating: This is a subjective scoring of the value of the game. Naturally some people may like games I find boring and dislike games that I enjoy. However, I include this so the reader has a point of comparison. These are letter grades with A being the best and F being a game that is totaly unworthy of the price.

CAMPAIGNS OF NAPOLEON 1812 & 1815
Publisher: SSI
Price: 49.95
Playing time: 6 hours
Graphics: Hires
Complexity: 3
Overall rating: B

This is two games in one. The first is a recreation of the Battle of Nations fought around Leipzig, the second is the campaign of Waterloo. A seperate mapboard and chips are used to help keep track of friendly and enemy troops but a hires mapboard can be called also. The player gives reports and issues orders in the same way the great generals did. The problem is that orders take time to arrive and may not be carried out in the way one had hoped. An easy game to play and offers hours of entertainment.

CLOSE ASSAULT
Publisher: Avalon Hill
Price: 34.95
Playing time: 3 hours
Graphics: N/A
Complexity: 4
Overall rating: B

The scenerio is man to man fighting in World War II. A seperate mapboard and chips are used to follow the movements of men and vehicles through streets and buildings. Scenerios may be changed to give each game a different flavor.

COMPUTER AMBUSH
Publisher: SSI
Price: 39.95
Playing time: 3 hours
Graphics: Hires
Complexity: 4
Overall rating: B

This is similar to the Avalon Hill game of Close Assault except the computer uses graphics to depict the mapboard and there are far less choices for setting up scenarios. However, this game is extremely detailed including movement inside of buildings.

COMPUTER BISMARK
Publisher: SSI
Price: 39.95
Playing time: 4 hours
Graphics: Hires
Complexity: 3
Overall rating: B

In this game the German player must sneak the Bismark and the Prinz Eugen out into the open Atlantic with the aid of some tankers and submarines to wreak havoc on the British merchant fleet. The British have cruisers, carriers, tankers and aircraft to stop the Germans. Excellent hidden movement game gives real feeling of the chase.

DAWN PATROL
Publisher: TSR
Price: 34.95
Playing time: 5-10 minutes
Graphics: Hires (animated)
Complexity: 3
Overall rating: C

This is actually more in the realm of an arcade game. The player flies one of several World War I aircraft against one to five enemies. The flight characteristics of most of the popular fighters is included and the animation is quite good, however, even after several hours of playing I still have trouble keeping the plane level! Fun but not very educational as wargames go.

GUADALCANAL CAMPAIGN
Publisher: SSI
Price: 39.95
Playing time: 40 hours (there are scenarios that play in less than 4 hours)
Graphics: Lores
Complexity: 3
Overall rating: B

This game recreates the battles in the Coral sea during World War II. EVERY carrier, battleship, cruiser, gunboat, minesweep, destroyer, troop transport and submarine that was involved in those battles is represented. The player issues orders to join ships together into task forces and maneuvers them on the map to find and do battle with the enemy. Major land bases are also included and there are literally hundreds of aircraft involved. This is the largest wargame for the Apple that I am aware of, yet the simple system allows even novices to get the hang of it quickly. You can also save games so you do not have to play in one setting.

MIDWAY CAMPAIGN
Publisher: Avalon Hill
Price: 15.95
Playing time: 1 hour
Graphics: Text
Complexity: 2
Overall rating: C

This is a simple game that pits two American task forces, with three carriers, against a huge Japanese force. The classic carrier problem is here: when you find the enemy you need to have your aircraft on deck and ready to launch, but if he finds you first all of those planes will make lovely fireworks on your ships. If you are interested in learning about strategy games this is an excellent one to start with.

NORTH ATLANTIC CONVOY RAIDERS
Publisher: Avalon Hill
Price: 15.95
Playing time: 1 hour
Graphics: Text
Complexity: 1
Overall rating: D

You control the Bismark trying to dodge the British fleet and knock out enemy convoys. The bad part is that the only control you have is which direction you head and whether or not you fight or run when there is an encounter. If you are really interested get Computer Bismark.

NUKE WAR
Publisher: Avalon Hill
Price: 15.95
Playing time: 1 hour
Graphics: Text
Complexity: 2
Overall rating: D

Hypothetical arms build up between two superpowers. You select to invest in bombers, missiles or espionage to find out what your enemy is up to. When the inevitable war starts you pick targets in enemy territory and let loose. Maybe interesting for people who thought 'The Day After' was a comedy.

OPERATION APOCALYPSE
Publisher: SSI
Price: 29.95
Playing time: 2 hours
Graphics: Hires
Complexity: 2
Overall rating: C

This game offers differing scenarios based on World War II strategy and tactics, although no actual battle is recreated. Infantry, armor and paratroop units are included. The main problem with this game is the small map board área which offers little room for maneuvering.

TANKTICS
Publisher: Avalon Hill
Price: 34.95
Playing time: 1 hour
Graphics: N/A
Complexity: 1
Overall rating: D

The player gets to choose German tanks for himself and Russian tanks for the computer, but the computer automaticaly gets twice as many units! This is Avalon

Hills first game to utilize a seperate mapboard and chips.

Computer plays a very poor game and I would not reccomend Tanktics for serious wargamers.

This is not nearly everything that is offered. Avalon Hill has just finished a new game called Dnieper River Line that uses a seperate map and over 300 unit counters pitting the Germans against the Russians in 1943 Ukraine, it should be interesting for the hardcore gamer. SSI has also produced games based on the Civil War and is starting a series of games based on a hypothetical war in Europe in the 1980's. If you are tired of the old space shoot'em up arcade games and are looking for some intellectual challenge I reccomend you look into this fascinating hobby.

One word of warning, however, is in order. Computers can not, as yet, offer the level of challenge and creativity of playing a human opponent. They will be there whenever you want to play, though, and computers do not get upset when they lose. If you are interested in Wargames in general give me a call or come to one of the Denver Gamers Association meetings the first and second saterdays of each month. The DGA also sponsors Genghis Con and Son of Genghis Con every year in Denver, two large gaming conventions where you can learn as much as you like about the art of wargaming.

END

LIBRARY LISTER

NOW APPEARING!

The Apple Pi catalog disk now contains Library Lister, a personal domain listing program. The program lists the catalog disk 49.5 times faster than the old program. Since it is personal domain software, you get the program free, but you are asked to send $2 directly to the author if you like it. The author, in turn, sends you a validation sticker for your copy. It's all based on the "Try-it before you buy-it" theory. So, be sure to get your catalog disk updated SOON so you can try Library Lister. I'm sure you'll like it.

DISK OF THE MONTH ORDER FORM

This form is for those members who are unable to attend the next meeting of Apple Pi and would like to purchase a DOM via mail. DOMs will still be available at the monthly meeting and swap meet.

QUANITY	ITEM	UNIT PRICE	TOTAL
_____	DOS 3.3 DOM - December 83	$5.00	_____
_____	December 83 Pascal DOM	$5.00	_____
_____	December 83 CP/M DOM	$5.00	_____
	Postage and Floppy Mailer	$1.25	1.25
	TOTAL		_____

Send form to Apple Pi, P.O. Box 17467, Denver, CO 80217

THE INS AND OUTS OF DISKETTES by Norm Henke

For many years I thought that diskettes were all the same; one brand was just as good as another. I recently started a project to test this assumption. I have found that there is a wide range in the quality of various brands of diskettes which is not necessarily related to price.

Lets start out with a few definitions so that the terms are clear:
Diskette- 5 1/4" flexible magnetic storage device, commonly called a floppy disk. The term "disk" is the proper name for an 8" floppy while "diskette" is the correct name for a 5 1/4" floppy.
Media-the round piece of polyester coated with ferric oxide on which the data is actually recorded.
Liner- a non-woven fabric lining the inside of the jacket. It cleans the media and absorbs dust.
Jacket- the outside covering of the diskette which is made of PVC. Most jackets are black but a few brands now come in different colors to make identification easier.
Envelope- the protective holder for storing the diskette. Also called the sleeve.
Hub ring- thin piece of plastic attached to the center of the diskette to reinforce the center hole.

The most frequently asked question about diskettes is "Can I safely use the back of the diskette?" The answer is "Yes", but it should be tested for flaws first. Most disk manufacturers make only one kind of double density diskette, the best quality they can. The only difference in the diskettes is how they were tested. Every diskette is tested on the front (which is actually the bottom of the diskette). If it passes it is sold as Single Sided. If it doesn't pass the media is flipped over in the jacket and tested again. Now if it passes they can still sell it as Single Sided. The better quality diskettes are just as good on the back as on the front. The poorer ones are frequently bad on the back, so this is what we have to look for.

Before actually testing a diskette you should bulk erase it. Radio Shack makes a Bulk Tape Eraser for about $15 which works well. Bulk erasing de-magnetizes the disk and erases whatever test pattern the manufacturer used. One of our members had a whole box of diskettes that would not initialize on his Apple. I suggested bulk erasing and sure enough that cleared up the problem. The manufacturer's testing had magnetized the diskettes so strongly that the Apple drive could not write on them. Every diskette you buy should be bulk erased and then tested on both sides before you use it to weed out the bad ones. Finding the flakey ones after saving something important could be a big disaster.

There are a couple of ways to test thr diskettes on the Apple. There is a disk testing program that is part of Locksmith 4.1. There is also a program called DiskPrep that will test the diskette surface. If you have a friend who has an IBM PC they could do a quick efficient test for you by formatting the diskettes on their double sided drives. That is what I did for this article.

To test the back a notch must be punched in the upper left corner of the diskette. The Disk Notcher made by Joe Carron, one of our Akron members, does a very neat job. The notch should be made very carefully so that the media is not damaged and no stray particles get inside the jacket. An alternative is to have a Write Protect Override Switch put on your disk drive. This club project made in February comes in real handy. If you find a bad spot on a diskette my advice is don't use it. If its bad on the front either return it to where you bought it or pitch it. It is not worth risking your data on a questionable $2 diskette. If its bad on the back only use the front.

Using both sides of a diskette can save a lot of money but I only suggest that the backs be used for archival storage or for programs that are used very little. There are a few problems with using the back. The main risk involved is that by turning the diskette upside down in the drive it will be rotating in the opposite direction. This could dislodge particles trapped inside the jacket and ruin the disk or read/write head. No one I know has ever had a problem using both sides so there is actually very little risk.

Now that we know how to test the media what else should we look for. There are a lot of things you can tell about a diskette just by looking at it. The first thing that you should check for is a hub ring. Only use diskettes with hub rings. They cost nothing extra and greatly extend the life of the diskette. The center of the diskette gets the most abuse. The hub ring strengthens the edge of the hole and prevents damage from misalignment of the diskette in the drive. Once the edge has been damaged by being crunched in the drive it will not seat properly and you might as well throw it away.

The envelope protects the diskette when you are not using it. Always keep them in the envelope when they are not in the drive. The best envelopes are made of a wolven plastic paper called Tyvek. They are static resistant and cannot be ripped. Regular paper sleeves are not as good.

The jacket should be made from a heavy gage of PVC. It should be strong and not easily bent. Thin jackets can mean a bent disk when inserting it in the drive. The jacket should be perfectly flat. A diskette that has a curve to it may not go into the drive properly. The media should be held snugly in the jacket to get proper cleaning by the liner. Not too tight though. It should spin with just a little drag. If its too loose the liner won't pick up the dust.

The life of the read/write head in the drive is directly related to the smoothness of the media. Look for a nicely polished shiny surface on the media. Compare the reflectivity of the area where the read/write head goes and the hub of the diskette. The writable area should be much shinier.

What really matters when using a diskette is how reliable it is. Actually testing a diskette is the only way to tell if it is really good. Every disk maker claims theirs is the best. Since there are so many criteria when judging a diskette it is had to pick "The Best", but there are plenty of good quality brands and some excellant bargains. I tested 17 different brands of diskettes using the guidelines outlined above. The media was tested by formating them on my IBM PC with Double sided Double Density drives. This checked both sides of each diskette at the same time at a higher density than on an Apple. The Tandon drives used on the PC are very picky about diskette quality. The results of the tests are displayed in the following table. The better diskettes are at the top of the list.

In conclusion I recommend choosing brands from the top third of the list and shop for the best price you can find. There are good bargains available right here in Cleveland or if you can wait, by mail order. There is no reason to spend more than $2.50 per diskette.

Special Thanks goes to Debbie Walker of 3M for the information she provided which helped me write this article.

DISK	JACKET	HUB RING	POLISH	MEDIA QUAL'	TOTAL	SAMPLE SIZE	PRICE EACH
BASF	5	5	4	5	19	30	2.40
BASF Bulk	5	5	4	5	19	250	1.75
3M-Scotch	3	4	5	5	17	40	2.40
Nashua (SD)	4	4	5	4	17	20	2.00
Generic	5	3	3	4	15	20	1.80
Memorex	4	4	3	4	15	12	3.80
Ultra Magnetics	3	4	4	4	15	20	2.10
Athana (SD)	3	4	2	4	13	24	2.50
Kargaroo	3	3	3	4	13	20	2.00
Maxell	2	4	3	4	13	12	4.50
Sertinel	5	2	2	4	13	20	1.90
Maxell Bulk	2	3	3	4	12	20	2.00
Quill	3	3	3	3	12	10	2.50
Dysan	4	3	1	3	11	15	3.50
Elephant	3	3	2	3	11	40	2.40
Control Data (SD)	2	3	2	3	10	80	1.60
Elephant Bulk	3	2	2	3	10	20	2.00
Verbatim	3	2	3	2	10	200	2.90
Opus	4	3	1	1	9	40	2.40
Wabash	2	2	3	2	9	20	2.50
Plain Jane (SD)	3	2	1	2	8	120	2.00

Ratings are on a scale of 1-5. (Poor,Fair,Good,Very Good,Excellant)
All disks are Single Sided, Double Density unless noted otherwise

BRAND NAME EVALUATIONS

3M-Scotch- consistant high quality. Bargain prices available locally.
Athana- decent diskettes, nothing special.
BASF- high quality at a fair price.
BASF Bulk- Consumers Report would call this a "Best Buy". Top quality at a real low price.
Control Data- a good deal when they were 12 for $20, quality not as good as before. Some of these were Verbatims.
Dysan- good diskettes but way over-priced. Most other brands are just as good.
Elephant- decent quality but not quite as good as last year.
Elephant Bulk- a good bargain at $2 each from Basic Computer.
Generic- Another "Best Buy". Made in Korea to very high standards.
Kangaroo- a new brand that looks good. Same maker as Ultras.
Maxell- these are also over-priced, jackets are too thin.
Maxell Bulk- another bargain from Basic Computer. I bet they didn't know these were Maxells.
Memorex- high rating due to good construction, only drawback is lousy paper envelope.
Nashua- "Best Buy" number 2. These have the best polish of any brand tested.
Opus- Being made in Cleveland doesn't help much. Frequently bad on the back. Stay away from these.
Plain Jane- The original bargain diskette. Not bad for its time.
Quill- Office supply Co. house brand. These are actually Elephants.
Sentinal- Another new brand. Good quality.
Ultra Magnetics- Another new brand. Good quality.
Verbatim- A real disappointment. Quality has been going downhill.
Wabash- very poor jacket.

Motor's Manual For Apple

A Book Review by Joyce Conklin
(c) 1982

HOW TO REPAIR THE APPLE COMPUTER
(c) 1982 by DataLine
2961 S. Las Palmas, Mesa, AZ 85202
List Price: $39.95

This small manual (listed as Vol. 1 because there are others in the planning stage) is printed in eye-ease (and xerographic-defeating) blue. When you see the size and compare it to the price, you might think it's another rip-off such as was more common in the earlier days of microcomputers as everyone tried to get on the bandwagon. But NOT SO... as is pointed out, if you have a reasonable degree of mechanical ability, one fix will save you the price of a service call and then some.

There is a disclaimer of responsibility on the part of the author -- all boo-boo's are your fault. But if you were really worried about that, you wouldn't try to fiddle with the computer anyway.

With that aside, you start reading the book and find that it really has the "ordinary" user in mind, not the electronic hobbyist. There is a diagram of an IC chip with arrows to show how to find the reference point (usually called Pin 1); this is necessary to know if you are going to remove and replace chips. The pins are all evenly spaced so it is possible to get the chip in backwards with unpredictable results.

The description of the various parts is in layman's language and the directions are very nicely given in a step-wise manner so that you can follow them. It's a good idea to read through the entire book first (after all, how long can it take to read 56 pages?) and then do what is advised. I discovered that the way I installed my TKC keypad was a no-no! Guess I was just lucky.

You are advised never to do repairs on the carpet, even if that is a nice soft place and gives a large area to place the unattached parts. The carpet can hold static electricity which is anathema to IC's. Like I say, I was lucky.
The directions include "GOTO" statements which allow for variations in the type of computer which you may have - this book will work for Apple][, as well as Apple][+ in it's many revisions.

The chapters include Trobule-shooting Overview, Problems with the Motherboard, Problems with the Power supply, Problems with the Keyboard, and Final Notes. In each case you are led through the process of trouble-shooting one step at a time. As I was reading through the book, I decided to look at the inside of my Apple and noticed for the first time the amount of dust mixed with grease that had accumulated on the motherboard from my fan. A careful dusting with clean short-bristled brush (actually an unused oil-painting brush), a swoosh with the Dust-Buster, and I was back in business.

Who knows when I would have noticed this problem, if I had not had the cover off while looking at each of the parts mentioned. The trouble-shooting chart looks like the ones you picked up to repair your TV tubes (you don't remember tubes? my oh my, are you young!) and shows which chips may be at fault for different problems. This is after you have checked out other potential problems such as bent pins (you shouldn't have any if you haven't been fooling around with the chips) or a board in the wrong slot (it's really fun trying to PR#6 when your controller card is in slot #7!).

Listed in the appendix are some mail-order electronic supply houses, so if you don't have an electronic shop in your town, you can still obtain the supplies.
If you aren't planning any repairs at the moment but just want to add on some of the many gadgets which are supplied for the Apple, this book is worth it in teaching you EXACTLY how to take the case apart (incidentally, the author claimed never to have run into ANY problems with the computer which were caused by the case!) and put it back together again, without removing vital parts - the screws that hold the motherboard in place, for example! How are you going to know not to unscrew those four at the back of the case bottom? They look like all the rest from the outside.

All in all, this is a very easy-to-read-and-follow book which may come in handy, and when it does, you will bless the day you had the foresight to invest in this rather inexpensive insurance policy. It's a real shock when you boot your favorite applications program and it doesn't work, and neither does the back up disk.

It's a real relief (no, that's not spelled R-O-L---- in this case) when you remember what you read and go inside to make sure all the connections are tight; a little pressing on the cards does the trick and your 64K program will now load. I recommend this book to all but the complete idiot, which by definition doesn't include any readers of this publication!

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